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Memorandum

To: Health Insurers and Health Plans

From: Robert W. Morrison, Vaccine Manager

Date: February 2006

Subject: Hepatitis A Vaccine for Children

This memorandum includes updated information about the recommendation for the use of hepatitis A vaccine and the availability of state supplied hepatitis A vaccine.

The Food and Drug Administration has approved an expanded age indication for the two currently licensed hepatitis A vaccines, Merck's VAQTA® and GlaxoSmithKline's Havrix®. The age indication for both products has been lowered from 2 years to 12 months of age.

Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) Recommendations

At their October 2005 meeting, the ACIP voted to approve the following recommendations:

- All children should receive hepatitis A vaccine at 1 year of age (i.e., 12-23 months). Vaccination should be completed according to the licensed schedules and integrated into the routine childhood vaccination schedule. Children who are not vaccinated by 2 years of age can be vaccinated at subsequent visits.

Recommendations for hepatitis A vaccination of groups at high risk have not changed.

The final ACIP recommendations for the expanded use of hepatitis A vaccine have not been published but interim recommendations can be found at http://www.cdc.gov/nip/recs/provisional_rec/hepA_child.pdf.

Hepatitis A Vaccine Supplied by Massachusetts Department of Public Health

At the current time, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) is not supplying hepatitis A vaccine for the routine immunization of children 12-23 months of age. MDPH will continue to supply

hepatitis A vaccine for high-risk children through 18 years of age. MDPH anticipates expanding availability of hepatitis A vaccine for the 12-23 month old cohort once adequate federal and state funding is secured.

The current procedural terminology (CPT) code for VAQTA® and Havrix® is 90633. Since providers will need to purchase hepatitis A vaccine privately for the routine immunization of 12-23 month old children, this code should be used for reimbursement.

We will keep you updated on the availability of state-supplied hepatitis A vaccine. If you have any questions regarding vaccine availability please contact the MDPH Vaccine Management Unit at 617-983-6828.

Encl. Supplied Vaccines and Patient Eligibility Criteria